

BENGAL NEWSLETTER

Premier Urges Gandhi To Visit Bihar? Ministry's Concern For Houseless Bustee Dwellers

CALCUTTA, Wednesday.

It is learnt on high authority that Mr. Gandhi is constantly exchanging letters with Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Premier of Bengal. The contents of the letters have been kept strictly confidential but from reliable sources certain illuminating facts are available.

Mr. Suhrawardy had been very courteous and kind to Mr. Gandhi and had granted him all sorts of administrative help in his town of Noakhali. It is understood that in one of his letters to Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Suhrawardy urged Mr. Gandhi to visit Bihar and sent a copy of the report of the Bihar Muslim League to Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi had said in a statement that he did not believe the report submitted by the Bihar Muslim League.

Normal conditions have been long restored in Noakhali but Mr. Gandhi is still staying there with his avowed 'Mission of Peace and Love'. But his day-to-day activities are being occupied with something else than the Mission of Peace and Love. He met the Congress leaders of Assam and gave them free advice to revolt against the Congress if the Congress accepted the compulsory grouping.

He has asked the Sikhs not to accept the compulsory Grouping. He is carrying on anti-Pakistan propaganda in the name of peace and love. This is a part of the pre-arranged plan and Mr. Gandhi's whole game is to hold the Noakhali affair in prominence with a view to overshadow Bihar.

SLUM CLEARING DRIVE

Calcutta is the second city of the British Empire and is popularly known as the city of palaces but the slums of Calcutta are a serious blot on its fair name. The slums are scattered all over the city and are inhabited by lakhs of poor people. In the small congested huts or tin-sheds thousands of people, including women and children are huddled up like cattle.

The sufferings and difficulties of the bustee-dwellers further increased during the Calcutta Killing when hundreds of bustees were burnt to ashes. It was a great problem for the Bengal Government to accommodate thousands of bustee-people. So long the Government had been sheltering them in different relief centres managed by the Government.

It is now learnt that the League Ministry have decided to construct two huge three-storeyed buildings for the accommodation of the bustee-dwellers.

'France Must Take To Moral Uplift of Her People Abroad'

PARIS, Wednesday.

While French and Viet-Nam troops were locked in a struggle in Northern French Indo-China, M. Leon Blum, the French Socialist Premier, today told representatives of various diplomatic corps at a New Year reception here that France "beyond the seas should assure moral and material development of the peoples for which she is responsible in an intimate and durable union. The Ambassadors of Argentina, the United States, China, Brazil, Mexico, Canada and Britain were present at the reception which was held at the French Foreign Office.

M. Blum added: "I have faith in my country and am certain the French nation will not fail in its task which is dictated by principles for which so many of her sons died."

The French Minister for Colonies, M. Marius Moutet, after a flying visit to Laos and Cambodia provinces in French Indo-China arrived back in Saigon, the capital of Cochinchina, tonight, it was reported in a despatch from Saigon. The Minister was greeted enthusiastically throughout his flying "study tour," the despatch said.

Another Saigon message said that the French High Commissioner, Admiral Thierry d'Argeulieu returned to Saigon late today after a flying visit to Hanoi, the capital of Tongkin Province.

NATIONALISTS CAPTURE ALL SEATS IN FRENCH INDIA

CHANDERNAGORE, Wednesday. —All the five seats of the Supreme Council of French India, allotted to Chandernagore, have been captured by the new Nationalist party. The members elected are Messrs. D. Bendra Nath Das, Arun Chandra Dutt, Sudhangshu Sekhar Ditt, Ekkari Dutt and Sallendra Kumar Mukherjee.

These members along with 9 representatives from the four other French colonies in India will frame a new constitution for French India.—A.P.I.

These buildings will have two-roomed suites which will be provided with electricity and other modern amenities.

The rent has been fixed at Rs. 7 for each suite. Although these two buildings will not be able to absorb all the bustee-dwellers, a sufficient number will be accommodated here. It is expected that similar other buildings would be built in the near future and the entire bustee-population will thus be absorbed.

Unemployment Among Rangoon Mining Labourers

RANGOON, Wednesday.

CONSIDERABLE unemployment among mining labourers is reported from the mining district of Tavoy, in the Tenasserim strip of the south-west Burma coast, and the Miners' and Labourers' Union are urging the Burma Government to lend support towards the reconstruction and reopening of the mines.

Mineowners contend that unless Government aid is forthcoming, mines cannot be reopened because the owners lack capital, having lost everything during the Japanese occupation. They also argue that finance is required for prospecting new mining areas, as present areas will be worked out soon.

They contend that the reopening of the mines will bring much-needed revenue to Government which would justify granting their requests.

In pre-war days, there were 17000 mining workers in the Tavoy district. The number today probably does not exceed 2,000.—A.P.A.

BE READY FOR FINAL STRUGGLE

—AUNG SAN

RANGOON, Wednesday.

AUNG SAN, Deputy Chairman of the Interim Government, reiterated his warning to the Burmese people to stand ready for the final struggle to achieve the country's freedom.

The Burmese leader was addressing a crowd of 40,000 people who staged a demonstration here on the eve of his departure to Delhi tomorrow en route for London.

Aung San said: "I cannot at present foresee the outcome of the Anglo-Burmese negotiations in London. Perhaps we may secure our demands, but if we do not we must be prepared for the next move. We do not want to stage a rebellion or anything like that.

We wish to gain our freedom as peacefully as possible. Nevertheless we must be prepared for the final struggle to achieve our aim. I, therefore, appeal to you to remain united, patient and vigilant." —A.P.I.

New Year Brings Reduction In Rationed Articles

AGRA, Wednesday.

THE New Year has brought the following reductions in the various rationed articles:

Kerosene oil from 2½ bottles to 1½ bottle per unit.
Sugar from 20 Ozs to 1 lb per unit.
Wheat from 7 Oz to 6 Oz per unit.
Rice from 4 Oz to 3 Oz per unit (inferior quality).
Gram from 4 Oz to 2 Oz (ordinary quality).

Barley from 4 Oz to 2 Oz per unit.
Bajra from 4 Oz to 2 Oz per unit.
Wheat Flour is not available. Firewood is out of stock in all Government depots since Sept. 1, 1946. Even cloth is not available. Whatever fine cloth is available is sold in the black market. The poor and the average class of people have to wait for months to get even coarse cloth ration coupons.—O.P.I.

COPENHAGEN, Wednesday: The newspaper 'Politiken' predicts the Danish Government will begin rationing meat in 1947, and would reduce rations of butter and sugar in an effort to conserve foreign exchange. Reduction in the use of newspaper also was forecast.—A.P.A.

London Talks on German Peace Treaty on Jan. 14

LONDON, Thursday.

DISCUSSIONS on proposals for the German Peace Treaty will, it is understood, begin in London on January 14. Invitations are being sent by the British Foreign Office to all the interested Powers who will be asked either to send their delegates to London or to submit their views on the proposed German Treaty in writing.

Simultaneously with the German talks, there will also be discussions about the Austrian Peace Treaty. In addition to the Deputies of the Foreign Ministers of the Big Four Powers, invitations are to be sent to some 14 Governments. It is expected that the London talks will last about one month to enable recommendations to be formulated for the consideration of the Big Four who are due to meet in Moscow on March 10.

Sir William Strang, Political Adviser in Germany to the British C-in-C, will represent the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Bevin, in the discussion.

The first task will be to receive claims of smaller Powers against Germany and hear their views on peace treaties.—Globe.

ANGLO-U.S. AIR TRAINING PACT

LONDON, Wednesday.

YESTERDAY'S announcement that Britain and the United States will exchange their air force men for training is being taken in some circles in London as a further indication that Britain and the United States have something approaching a military agreement which would make possible the immediate co-operation of their forces.

The Communist Press of Britain alleges that this agreement is much stronger than appeared to be the case and has, of course, been critical of it on grounds that it is potentially inimical to Russia.

Now the subject has been taken up by other newspapers, and the Washington correspondent of the News Chronicle cables that the two countries are rapidly completing their plans for land, air and sea co-operation, if they are involved in another war. The technical problem involved is one of standardising equipment and training.—Globe.

ATOMIC POWER STATIONS TO BE BUILT SOON

LONDON, Wednesday.

THE building of the first of a number of atomic power stations is to be started soon in Britain and it is expected to be ready for working in about two years.

One of the features of the power house will be a deep pit to house an atomic pile, in other words equivalent to a furnace which gives off great heat and which is controlled by adjustment of uranium in it.

Heat can be used for the creation of steam for driving turbines. The problem facing scientists is the protection of personnel from deadly rays and systems of remote control and concrete shields are being devised.—GLOBE.

U.S. Senator Accused Of Illegal Gratifications

WASHINGTON, Thursday.

SENATOR THEODORE BILBO of Mississippi who in a majority report of the Senate War Investigation Committee just issued is declared to have "improperly used his high office for personal gain in dealing with war contractors", told his Senate colleagues in a letter made public last night, "I certainly have no objection to submitting their war-time record and testimony (before the Senate War Investigation Committee) to the Department of Justice".

The letter accompanied a response to the Investigating Committee's report prepared on behalf of Senator Bilbo by his lawyer Mr. Forrest B. Jackson.

This response declared: "True evidence presented to the Committee clearly indicates that Senator Bilbo was guilty of no impropriety as a United States Senator and that he did not in any instance use his high office for his personal gain in his dealings with war contractors or any other persons.

The report of the Senate War Investigation Committee said: "The Committee was unable to accept the theory that Senator Bilbo's aid to those dealing in Government contracts and the benefits he received were unrelated."

It estimated "gratuities or benefits" from contractors as worth \$7,089 to \$8,721 dollars and drew the attention to a car, a swimming pool and loss of \$48,042 dollars by contractor friends in the operation of Senator Bilbo's farm.

County officials admitted that

FRENCH C-IN-C IN GERMANY TO RESIGN?

BERLIN, Thursday.

PERSISTENT reports here say that General Joseph Pierre Koenig may shortly give up his post as Commander-in-Chief of the French occupation troops in Germany.

Rear-Admiral Pierre Emile Barjot, who took part in Allied landings in North Africa, has been mentioned as his most likely successor.

Reports described the expected resignation as a consequence of reactions caused by General Koenig's recent announcement of a customs cordon between the Saar and the rest of Germany.

While a Paris dispatch said that the French Premier's office officially denied the report that Koenig had resigned, some observers here consider that an announcement of the resignation is likely before the Foreign Ministers' Moscow Conference due in March. The Saar is expected to be on the agenda at this conference.

Other quarters, however, do not rule out the possibility that the French Government will indicate their confidence in General Koenig.

Observers say that Lieutenant-General Lucius DeClay, United States Deputy Military Governor in Germany, has found himself un-supported by the United States Government in his protest against General Koenig's Saar action as "unilateral."

So far there has been no repudiation of General Koenig's actions by the French authorities. But reports that his resignation is impending have closely followed foreign comment on the latest developments in the Saar.—Reuter.

French Count Charged As Nazi Collaborator

PARIS, Thursday.

COUNT PAUL DE LESSEPS, (63), arrested for collaboration with the Germans is being accused before Paris courts of plotting with the Nazis to help them destroy the Suez Canal which was built by his father Count Ferdinand De Lesseps.

The captured Nazi documents are said to prove that the Count negotiated with the Germans for the sale of a territory at Alexandretta between Turkey and Syria for £5,000,000. Bases for Luftwaffe were to have been built there, it is alleged and used to pave way for the German seizure of the Suez Canal and British oil interests in the Middle East.

He will also be accused of negotiating a deal in the Suez Canal shares said to have been seized from Jews and advising Germans on the possibility of raising a revolt in Egypt.

The Count appeared in the court today on a charge of intelligence with the enemy. He told the magistrate that the French State owed him £10,000,000 and had brought this charge to avoid payment.—Globe.

BRITAIN TO NATURALISE ORPHAN REFUGEES

LONDON, Wednesday.

Orphan children who fled to Britain from Germany and Austria to escape Nazi persecution before the war are to be granted British citizenship.

Normally no one under the age of 21 can apply for naturalisation without the consent of their parents but Britain has decided that a special concession be granted to these children—numbering more than 1,000. A selection board is being set up for questioning applicants. Naturalisation will be made on the Board's recommendation.

At present the children are living in hostels or with British families under refugee organisations.—GLOBE.

ALUMINIUM PRODUCTION IN U. S. S. R.

LONDON, Wednesday.—Moscow radio reports Russia's giant Bogolslovsky Aluminium Works, in the Ural mountains, will produce annually after its completion in 1950 about 50 per cent more aluminium than the entire Russian aluminium industry produced before the war.—A.P.A.

RUSSIA REVISING GERMAN POLICY : PRICE ASKED FOR REMOVAL OF ZONAL BARRIERS

LONDON Thursday.

A NEW Russian plan which will revise her policy in Germany both towards the Allies and Germans is being considered in the Kremlin, according to the "Daily Mail" special correspondent in Stockholm.

It is believed in diplomatic quarters in Moscow that these deliberations will eventually lead to a Russian offer to remove economic and military barriers between the Red Army zone and the rest of Germany.

The price Soviet will demand for this concession is a revision of the present inter-Allied agreement on reparations from Germany.

Russia is understood to be anxious that her share of reparations from the three Western zones be paid not in machinery from dismantled factories as agreed at Potsdam, but from the day-to-day production of consumer goods by West and South German industries.

The Kremlin's new policy towards Germany, which is expected to be announced at the Foreign Ministers' meeting in Moscow on March 10, is seen as a victory for the "moderates" in the Kremlin, led by Marshal Stalin himself and, above all, for the Soviet C-in-C, Marshal Sokolovsky who, the correspondent says, has been frankly critical of the Russian occupation policy in Germany.

FAILURE OF PRESENT PLAN

Giving reasons for Russia's readiness to talk with the Allies over the German problem, the correspondent says:

Politically she has failed in her original plan to create a strong dominant German Communist Party not only in one zone, but in all Germany and is ready to cut her to losses.

Economically, Russia has already removed everything she wants from her zone, but she needs still more and is now anxious to reach a new agreement for reparations' payments from the British zone; and

All over the world, the Soviet Union is now passing through a period not only of reconstruction, but literally of re-creation during which the main political priorities are good-will abroad and obtaining, if possible, giant credits from the United States.

The correspondent further says that until now, the Soviet proposals for a revision of the reparations' agreement has been received non-committally by the British and Americans who suspect that behind the Soviet offer was a plan to draw Western Germany into an economic trading system dependent on Russia and countries in Eastern Europe along her border.

It is believed that the British and Americans will accept the Russian plan as it stands, only if the Soviet Union will agree to help feed the peoples of Western and Southern Germany and also if Russia will agree to a revision of Germany's Eastern frontier based on the rivers Oder and Neisse.—Globe.

LONDON, Wednesday: The Ministry of Transport reports Britain has 3,000,000 tons of shipping awaiting repairs or conversion for use as civilian vessels.—A.P.A.

Govt. Servants in Sarawak to Strike

LONDON, Wednesday.

NATIVE civil servants in Sarawak have decided not to continue their jobs because they object to a circular issued by the Governor. This is stated in a cable of protest sent by the Malayan National Union to Mr. W. C. Coker, the London solicitor who represents Mr. Anthony Brooke, who was Rajah Muda of Sarawak up to the time of the cession of Sarawak to the British Crown.

The circular forbids any action by Government servants to keep alive the question of cession of Sarawak. Mr. Brooke is on his way by sea from Hong Kong to Malaya. The Sarawak Government has banned his projected visit to Sarawak.—GLOBE.



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